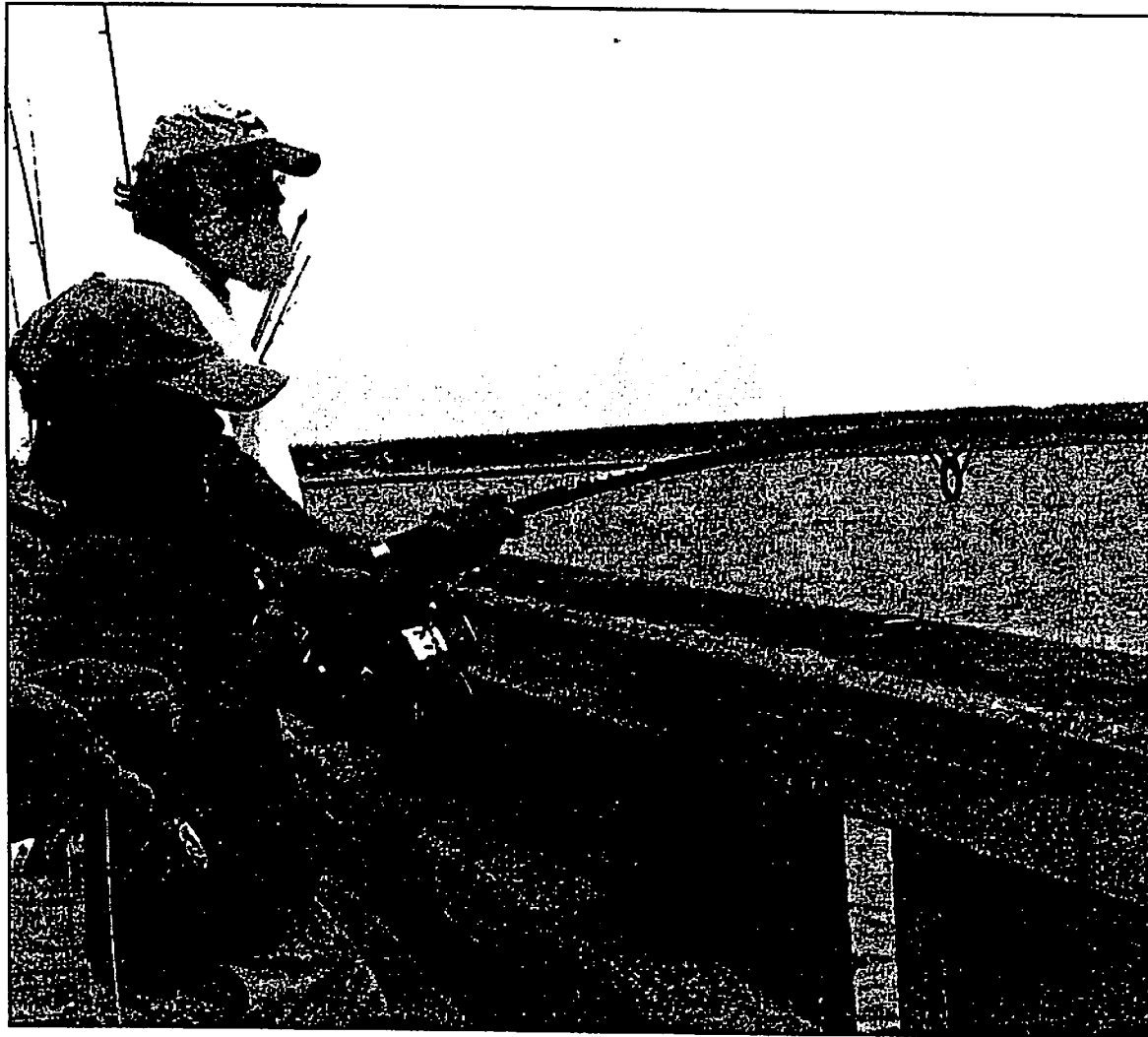


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Staff photo/Debra Feldman

Pull! Titus Salter reels in a striper as experienced fisherman, Dave Lindamood, looks on, shouting instructions.

Reeling it in

In absence of shellfishing, area fisherman rely on the catch of the day

By Debra Filcman
MPG Newspapers

DUXBURY — The sun may be slow to shine this summer and marine biology may not be cooperating with local industry, but people are still making the most of the bay.

The absence of quality rays or shellfish to catch and sell doesn't keep the beach parking lot from filling up. While some folks bundle up to walk the beach, others warm themselves with a run.

But mostly, people are taking to the rod and reel for recreation.

The Powder Point Bridge was spattered with amateur fisherman this week, trying to make the most of some free time and reasonable temperatures.

"Well, there's no shellfishing today," Peter Greene said. "So I thought this would be a fun way to spend the day instead."

Greene, of Holbrook, is a union drywall worker by trade, but shellfishing is his hobby. And he enjoys eating his harvest.

But since red tide shut down area shellfishing beds, Greene's decided to do the next best thing. Standing along the rail of the bridge, he spent the afternoon with just a single rod and a bucket of bait.

"I've been fishing for years," he said. "I grew up on the water in Ireland; I'm used to it."

A native of Galway, Greene said that Duxbury Bay is always a destination for fishing.

Brother and sister Ally and Mark O'Neill of Braintree were also on the bridge, sharing a fishing pole.

Dressed for the beach in bathing suits and towels, they said they thought it would be a beach day.

Wanting to make the most of it, since they were already out, they

thought they'd giving fishing a whirl.

"She's never caught one before," Mark said, handing his sister the pole as he felt a tug.

The pair, who came to the beach for the day from their family's cottage in Brant Rock, worked together to reel in the fish.

"Oh no, it's going to splash us," Ally yelled as her brother nailed it down with his foot.

"Oh, wow, it's really pretty," she added, once it was safely on the ground.

Unfortunately,

the fish was too small and they tossed it back.

Fishing nearby, the father and son team of Richard Salter and 12-year-old Titus had similar problems. From Geneva, N.Y., and Honolulu, Hawaii, respectively, the pair were in town for just a week visiting Richard's parents and sister in Duxbury.

"We're just learning here, but we've come fishing off the bridge before," Richard Salter said. "We come to visit a few times a year."

The pair caught a few stripers early in the day, but had to toss them back because they were too small. The day before, they said, Titus caught a bluefish.

This morning though, was slow. And Titus teased that his father scared the fish away with his banana.

"Bananas have enzymes that keep the fish away," Titus said. "That's what they say in Hawaii."

Father and son were learning by trial and error, but also from the advice of neighboring fisherman David Lindamood, also known as the "Santa Claus of Powder Point Bridge."

Lindamood has been fishing at Powder Point for 19 years, but has only lived in town for about four.

"I fish for dinner," he said.

Lindamood, who met the father and son duo last summer while all

three were fishing off the bridge, was quick to give Titus tips.

"But this lesson is gonna cost you," he said, laughing when Titus suddenly felt a tug on his pole.

The two worked together to land the fish, and Lindamood showed his young apprentice how to hold his catch down with his foot and measure it.

"I guess this disproves your banana theory, huh?" Richard Salter asked his son.

"Yeah," Titus responded. "I guess that's only true in the

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— David Bitters

Pacific."

Though the striped proved too small to keep, before tossing it over the rail again, Lindamood explained that it's tradition to kiss the first striped of the day. He held it up to Titus' lips, and he gave it a quick peck.

The pair was obviously ready for more; they were spotted the next day at Baymen Outfitters looking for more bait.

Owner Captain David Bitters said business has been stellar, in spite of the weather.

"We're having trouble keeping up with it," he said.

The most popular fish caught from the bridge are striped bass. Flounder and cod used to be popular as well, he said, but they've been over-fished commercially.

For those looking to give fishing a whirl, locals use mackerel to bait the bass. It costs around 49 cents per chunk, and is sold at Baymen, mostly in three-packs which contain 12 pieces, he said.

Penn Power Sticks and Shimano Baitrunners are the most popular rods, which can run customers anywhere from \$50 to \$200.

"The bridge is a really popular spot, and so people come here because we're the only game in town," Bitters said. "But we also take care of them, just like they take care of us."